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Security Council

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Letter dated 27 July 2018 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the fifty-eighth monthly report of the Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) (see annex). The report covers the period from 23 June to 23 July 2018.

I welcome the confirmation by the Director General that the OPCW Technical Secretariat has now verified the destruction of all 27 chemical weapons production facilities declared by the Syrian Arab Republic. The long-awaited completion of this task constitutes an important step towards the full implementation of resolution 2118 (2013).

With regard to the declaration and further submissions by the Syrian Arab Republic, I note that, on 10 July 2018, the OPCW Technical Secretariat received a note verbale from the Syrian Arab Republic. The note contained responses to the non-exhaustive list of questions attached to a letter dated 10 April 2018 from the Director General regarding the outstanding issues related to the chemical weapons declaration by the Syrian Arab Republic. I further note that those responses are being analysed by the Declaration Assessment Team of OPCW.

I take this opportunity to reiterate the need for all the open issues related to the declaration by the Syrian Arab Republic to be closed. I note with continuing regret that OPCW remains unable to resolve all identified gaps, inconsistencies or discrepancies. I strongly encourage the Syrian Arab Republic to extend its full cooperation to OPCW to resolve those issues.

During the most recent reporting period, the OPCW fact-finding mission in the Syrian Arab Republic issued two reports. Those two reports were transmitted to you by my letter of 23 July 2018 and circulated to the Security Council as document S/2018/732.

I take note of the reference by the Director General to the decision taken on 27 June 2018 by the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, at its fourth special session. In particular, I note the decision, inter alia, that the OPCW Technical Secretariat shall put in place arrangements to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic and that the Director General is to provide to the Secretary-General a separate report on the initial implementation of that decision, within 30 days of its adoption.

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Once again, I must reiterate that the use of chemical weapons, by any party to the conflict, is without justification and is wholly unacceptable. Such profound violations of international law cannot continue to go unaddressed and unresolved, and those responsible for these acts must be held to account.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

Annex

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

I have the honour to transmit to you my report entitled "Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme", prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of OPCW Executive Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1 and United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), both dated 27 September 2013, for transmission to the Security Council (see enclosure). My report covers the period from 23 June 2018 to 23 July 2018 and also covers the reporting requirements of Executive Council decision EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013.

(*Signed*) Ahmet **Üzümcü**

Enclosure

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

Note by the Director-General

Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme

Background

1. In accordance with subparagraph 2(f) of the decision by the Executive Council (hereinafter "the Council") at its Thirty-Third Meeting (EC-M-33/DEC.1, dated 27 September 2013), the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat") is to report to the Council on a monthly basis regarding the implementation of that decision. In accordance with paragraph 12 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), the report by the Secretariat is also to be submitted to the Security Council through the Secretary-General.

2. The Council, at its Thirty-Fourth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled "Detailed Requirements for the Destruction of Syrian Chemical Weapons and Syrian Chemical Weapons Production Facilities" (EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013). In paragraph 22 of that decision, the Council decided that the Secretariat should report on its implementation "in conjunction with its reporting required by subparagraph 2(f) of Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1".

3. The Council, at its Forty-Eighth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled "Reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria" (EC-M-48/DEC.1, dated 4 February 2015) noting the Director-General's intent to include reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria (FFM), along with information on the Council's discussion thereof, as part of the monthly reporting pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). Similarly, the Council, at its Eighty-First Session, adopted a decision entitled "Report by the Director-General Regarding the Declaration and Related Submissions by the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-81/DEC.4, dated 23 March 2016), noting the Director-General's intent to provide information on the implementation of that decision.

4. The Council, at its Eighty-Third Session, adopted a decision entitled "OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism Reports on Chemical Weapons Use in the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-83/DEC.5, dated 11 November 2016). In subparagraph 12(a) of that decision, the Council decided that the Director-General shall "regularly inform the Council on the implementation of this decision and incorporate information regarding the implementation of this decision into his monthly reporting to the United Nations Security Council, through the United Nations Secretary-General, regarding EC-M-33/DEC.1".

5. This, the fifty-eighth monthly report, is therefore submitted in accordance with the aforementioned Council decisions and includes information relevant to the period from 23June 2018 to 23 July 2018.

Progress achieved by the Syrian Arab Republic in meeting the requirements of Executive Council decisions EC-M-33/DEC.1 and EC-M-34/DEC.1

6. Progress by the Syrian Arab Republic is as follows:

(a) The Secretariat has verified the destruction of all 27 chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) declared by the Syrian Arab Republic. Destruction of

the final two CWPFs took place on 7 June and 23 June respectively. On 12 July, the Secretariat conducted inspections at both sites and verified that all declared buildings had been razed to ground level and all debris removed.

(b) On 17 July 2018, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted to the Council its fifty-sixth monthly report (EC-89/P/NAT.1, dated 18 July 2018) regarding activities on its territory related to the destruction of its CWPFs, as required by paragraph 19 of EC-M-34/DEC.1.

Progress in the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons by States Parties hosting destruction activities

7. As stated in previous reports, all of the chemicals declared by the Syrian Arab Republic that were removed from its territory in 2014 have now been destroyed.

Activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to Executive Council decisions EC-81/DEC.4 and EC-83/DEC.5

8. During the reporting period, the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) continued its efforts to clarify all outstanding issues regarding the initial declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic in accordance with paragraph 3 of Council decision EC-81/DEC.4 and paragraph 6 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5.

9. In a letter to the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Syrian Arab Republic, Dr Faisal Mekdad, dated 10 April 2018, the Director-General reiterated that unanswered questions remain regarding Syria's chemical weapons declaration and require a response. An updated, non-exhaustive list of questions was attached to the Director-General's letter. On 10 July, the Secretariat received a note verbale from the Syrian Arab Republic with responses to the questions attached to the Director-General's letter that pertain to the chemical weapons-related activities conducted at the Scientific Studies and Research Centre (SSRC). The note verbale has been translated and is currently being analysed by the DAT.

10. To update States Parties on the recent work of the DAT, the Director-General issued a Note entitled "Report on the Work of the Declaration Assessment Team" (EC-88/HP/DG.2, dated 28 June 2018). The report concluded that, while the Syrian Arab Republic has remained engaged with the Secretariat in efforts to clarify outstanding issues, the nature and substance of the information that has been provided to the Secretariat do not enable it to resolve all identified gaps, inconsistencies, or discrepancies in the declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic. The report further concludes that there has been an increase in the number of issues with the Syrian Arab Republic's declaration since the DAT began its work, and that the Secretariat therefore remains unable to state that the Syrian Arab Republic has submitted a declaration that can be considered accurate and complete in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention (hereinafter "the Convention") and Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1.

11. As noted by the Director-General in his report "Status of Implementation of Executive Council Decision EC-83/DEC.5 (dated 11 November 2016)" (EC-88/DG.13, dated 14 June 2018), the Secretariat has begun planning the inspections at the sites identified by the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism in its third and fourth reports, in accordance with paragraph 10 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5. The Secretariat also continues to monitor the security situation through the United Nations Department of Safety and Security to identify permissive security conditions for those inspections.

12. With regard to paragraph 11 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5, the Director-General in the aforementioned report provided information on the status of the

Secretariat's two rounds of inspections that were conducted at each of the Barzah and Jamrayah facilities of the SSRC in 2017 and, also as previously reported, noted that the results of the analysis of samples taken during those inspections did not indicate the presence of scheduled chemicals, and that the inspection teams did not observe any activities inconsistent with obligations under the Convention. The Director-General also noted that, as each of these facilities are to be inspected twice per year in accordance with paragraph 11 of EC-83/DEC.5, two rounds of inspections are due in 2018.

Other activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to the Syrian Arab Republic

13. The United Nations Office for Project Services continues to provide support to the OPCW mission in the Syrian Arab Republic in accordance with the Tripartite Agreement.

14. As at the cut-off date of this report, one OPCW staff member was deployed as part of the OPCW mission in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Supplementary resources

15. As previously reported, the Trust Fund for Syria Missions was established in November 2015 to support the OPCW FFM and other remaining activities, such as those of the DAT. As at the cut-off date of this report, total contributions to this fund stood at EUR 17.1 million. Contribution agreements had been concluded with Canada, Chile, Finland, France, Germany, Monaco, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and the European Union.

Activities carried out with respect to the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria

16. Guided by Council decisions EC-M-48/DEC.1 and EC-M-50/DEC.1 (dated 23 November 2015), as well as by United Nations Security Council resolution 2209 (2015), the FFM continues to study all available information relating to the allegations of use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

17. On 2 July, the Secretariat issued a Note entitled "Report of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria Regarding the Incidents in Al-Hamadaniyah on 30 October 2016 and in Karm Al-Tarrab on 13 November 2016" (S/1642/2018, dated 2 July 2018). This report concluded that, on the basis of the information received and analysed, the prevailing narrative of the interviews, and the results of the laboratory analyses, the FFM cannot confidently determine whether or not a specific chemical was used as a weapon in the incidents that took place in the neighbourhood of Al-Hamadaniyah on 30 October 2016 and in the area of Karm al-Tarrab on 13 November 2016. The report further expressed that the FFM is of the view that the persons affected in the reported incidents may, in some instances, have been exposed to some type of non-persistent, irritating substance.

18. The Secretariat subsequently issued a Note entitled "Interim Report of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria Regarding the Incident of Alleged Use of Toxic Chemicals as a Weapon in Douma, Syrian Arab Republic, on 7 April 2018" (S/1645/2018, dated 6 July 2018 and Corr.1, dated 10 July 2018). This interim report stated that various chlorinated organic chemicals, along with residues of explosive, were found in samples collected from Douma by the FFM. The report further states that work by the FFM to establish the significance of these results is ongoing, and that the FFM needs to continue its work to draw final conclusions regarding the alleged incident.

19. The Secretariat briefed States Parties on the recent activities of the FFM during the Council's Eighty-Eighth Session, held from 10 to 12 July 2018.

Decision C-SS-4/DEC.3 of the Conference of the States Parties at its Fourth Special Session

20. The Conference of the States Parties (hereinafter "the Conference") at its Fourth Special Session adopted a decision entitled "Addressing the Threat from Chemical Weapons Use" (C-SS-4/DEC.3, dated 27 June 2018). In paragraph 8 of the decision, the Conference encouraged the Director-General to continue to provide regular updates on the FFM's operations, taking into account the need to protect the security and safety of Secretariat personnel.

21. In paragraph 10 of the decision, the Conference decided that the Secretariat shall put in place arrangements to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic by identifying and reporting on all information potentially relevant to the origin of those chemical weapons in those instances in which the FFM in Syria determines or has determined that use or likely use occurred, and cases for which the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism has not issued a report. The Conference further decided, in paragraph 12, that the Secretariat shall preserve and provide information to the investigation mechanism established by the United Nations General Assembly in resolution 71/248 (2016), as well as to any relevant investigatory entities established under the auspices of the United Nations.

22. Pursuant to paragraph 24 of the decision, the Director-General will provide a separate report on its initial implementation to all States Parties and to the United Nations Secretary-General within 30 days of the decision, and thereafter a separate report on progress to the Council at each regular session.

Conclusion

23. The main focus of the future activities of the OPCW mission in the Syrian Arab Republic will be on the activities of the FFM; the implementation of Council decisions EC-83/DEC.5 and EC-81/DEC.4, including declaration-related issues; annual inspections of the underground structures already verified as destroyed; and implementation of Conference decision C-SS-4/DEC.3.

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General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventy-third year

Identical letters dated 27 July 2018 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

I write to urgently draw your attention to the critical situation in the Occupied State of Palestine, including East Jerusalem, due to Israel's endless provocations and illegal actions against the Palestinian people and their holy sites in Occupied East Jerusalem, particularly the Haram al-Sharif, which houses the Aqsa Mosque.

Again, we are witnessing the same provocative actions against the holy sites in Occupied East Jerusalem, by Israel, the occupying Power, which are further fuelling already high tensions and continuing to destabilize the fragile situation on the ground. In this regard, today, Israeli occupying forces violently stormed the Aqsa Mosque compound, firing tear gas and stun grenades at Muslim worshippers gathered for Friday prayers, injuring nearly 40 Palestinians, including two of the Waqf guards. In addition, Israeli occupying forces arrested six Palestinians. Moreover, Israel took yet an additional dangerous and condemnable action in which it sealed off the Aqsa Mosque with iron chains, preventing Palestinian worshippers from entering to worship, which led to confrontations between Israeli occupying forces and Muslim worshippers.

This dangerous escalation coincides with the first anniversary of the Aqsa Mosque protests of July 2017, when tens of thousands of Palestinians prayed outside the compound for early two weeks, protesting against the new metal detectors installed by the Israeli occupying authorities. The latest illegal measures taken today by the Israeli occupying forces represent a clear demonstration of Israel's persistent policy of violating the historic status quo of the holy sites of the City, which has only served to aggravate religious sensitivities and tensions on the ground. Israel, the occupying Power, must respect the historic status quo and the sacredness of the holy site and cease all actions that are inflaming the situation and that risk exacerbating heightened religious sensitivities with potentially grave consequences.

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Israeli closures and measures regarding the Aqsa Mosque compound should not be seen as isolated events, but rather as part of broader Israeli policies to alter the character, status and demographics of Occupied East Jerusalem and transform it into a Jewish-only city. As such, what is taking place today cannot be divorced from other illegal policies and practices being carried out by Israel throughout the City and the rest of the West Bank, including its construction and expansion of settlements, home demolitions, forced evictions and the displacement of Palestinian families. Nor can it be divorced from the Israeli aggression against the Gaza Strip and the adoption of the so-called "Jewish nation-state law", which aims to intensify Israel's colonization, segregation and discrimination regime in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

We recall that the international community has rightly never recognized Israeli sovereignty over East Jerusalem and considers it occupied territory. We further reiterate that all illegal Israeli actions at the Haram al-Sharif and throughout the rest of Occupied East Jerusalem constitute violations of international law, including the numerous relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2334 (2016), and General Assembly resolutions, including resolution ES-10/19, calling for a cessation of all policies and measures aimed at altering the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and calling for respect by the occupying Power of its obligations under international law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, under which such actions are explicitly prohibited.

We therefore call upon the international community to condemn these illegal actions by Israel, the occupying Power, and to firmly demand that it immediately cease all measures and provocations that are violating the status quo of the holy sites of the City. Israel, the occupying Power, must respect the right of the Palestinian people to freely access the compound and the right of Muslims to worship at the compound without any interference whatsoever.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 642 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 17 July (A/ES-10/791-S/2018/710), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine
to the United Nations

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United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction and Mission priorities

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), by which the Council established the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and requested me to report at regular intervals on the implementation of its mandate. The report covers the activities of UNMIK, and developments related thereto, from 16 April to 15 July 2018.

2. The priorities of the Mission remain to promote security, stability and respect for human rights in Kosovo and in the region. In furtherance of its goals, UNMIK continues its constructive engagement with Pristina and Belgrade, all communities in Kosovo and regional and international actors. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Kosovo Force continue to perform their roles within the framework of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). The European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) continues its presence in Kosovo, in line with the statement by the President of the Security Council of 26 November 2008 (S/PRST/2008/44) and my report of 24 November 2008 (S/2008/692). The United Nations agencies, funds and programmes work closely with the Mission.

II. Key political and security developments

3. The overall situation during the period under review remained stable, in contrast with the previous reporting period, when a number of developments had a negative impact on relations between Belgrade and Pristina. Consistent with the statement made by the Serbian List for Kosovo and Metohija party following the arrest and expulsion from Kosovo of the Director of the Office for Kosovo and Metohija of the Government of Serbia, Marko Đurić, on 26 March, ministers and members of the Assembly of Kosovo from the Serbian List continued to refrain from participating in formal sessions of the government or the Assembly and to protest the delayed establishment of the association/community of Serb-majority municipalities. Meanwhile, Kosovo Albanian parties in the governing coalition and the opposition focused on the position of Pristina in the European Union-facilitated dialogue with Belgrade, which resumed on 24 June. Discussions continued within and outside the Assembly of Kosovo on the composition and strategy of the Pristina negotiating team, with separate proposals submitted, for consideration by the Assembly, by the Prime

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Minister of Kosovo, Ramush Haradinaj, on 10 April and by the President of the Assembly, Kadri Veseli, on 23 April.

4. Some incidents during the reporting period showed the potential for renewed tensions. Serbian Orthodox Church officials reported damage to churches in two separate incidents on 17 May in the municipality of Ferizaj/Uroševac. On 26 May, construction was initiated on a transit road within the special protective zone of the Visoki Dečani monastery, a World Heritage Site of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The Serbian Orthodox Church issued a communiqué in which it stressed that the construction works violated the Kosovo Law on Special Protective Zones and challenged the conclusions of the Implementation and Monitoring Council, which oversees the special protective zones surrounding religious sites. The Serbian List, the Kosovo Minister for Communities and Returns of the Serbian List, the Office for Kosovo and Metohija of the Government of Serbia and Kosovo Serb civil society groups also protested the roadworks. The international community reacted in a unified voice and, following consultations with the mayor of Deçan/Dečani, recommended the suspension of the works inside the special protective zone. In response, the Prime Minister of Kosovo, the Minister of Infrastructure of Kosovo and the mayor of Deçan/Dečani clarified that the works would continue at a distance of 5 km from the special protective zone. The Implementation and Monitoring Council met on 10 July, after a three-month hiatus, to discuss the construction works and agreed to visit the site soon, together with the Prime Minister.

5. In a separate incident, on 28 May, about 60 Kosovo Albanians staged a protest in Klinë/Klina municipality to prevent 30 Kosovo Serb pilgrims from attending the "Sveta Trojica" Orthodox festival near the ruins of the Serbian Orthodox Church of the Holy Trinity. The Kosovo police intervened when some protestors threw stones at the pilgrims, causing serious injury to one and light injuries to two others. On 30 May, in Lipjan/Lipljan municipality, a young Kosovo Albanian male verbally harassed and physically attacked a Kosovo Serb man who intervened to stop a group of Kosovo Albanian teenagers from harassing Kosovo Serb children at the local playground. The Kosovo Minister for Communities and Returns of the Serbian List condemned both incidents and urged the Kosovo police to bring the perpetrators to justice. A few days later, local officials and community leaders in Lipjan/Lipljan municipality launched a mediation process that helped to defuse tensions while the investigation continued. From 28 May to 1 June, a health centre run by the Government of Serbia in the ethnically mixed village of Suhodoll i Poshtëm/Donji Suvi Do in North Mitrovica was damaged in three separate stoning incidents.

6. Further to the aforementioned incidents, on 3 June, the Serbian List issued a communiqué in which it condemned recent attacks against Kosovo Serbs and their properties and alleged that 16 ethnically motivated incidents against Kosovo Serbs had taken place in May. On 5 June, the Office of the Prime Minister of Kosovo issued a communiqué in which it condemned recent incidents with "inter-ethnic motives" that negatively affect relations between communities in Kosovo and called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice. The President of Kosovo, Hashim Thaçi, made similar public remarks. In a statement issued on 6 June, my Special Representative for Kosovo, Zahir Tanin, welcomed these statements, noting that "there is no place for intimidation in a democratic society".

7. Meanwhile, the government of Kosovo continued to call for the transformation of the Kosovo Security Force into an armed force, while the leadership of Serbia remained strongly opposed to it. On 28 April, a Kosovo Serb member of the Kosovo Security Force was detained and questioned by the Serbian police at Gate 5 at the Končulj/Konçul crossing point on the Administrative Boundary Line. The Prime Minister of Kosovo expressed concern over the incident, noting that it undermined

the efforts of the government of Kosovo to integrate the Kosovo Serb community. On 27 May, the vehicle of another Kosovo Serb member of the Kosovo Security Force was set ablaze in Zubin Potok municipality, in northern Kosovo. On 10 July, Kosovo police arrested, and released later that day, five Kosovo Serbs in the Gjilan/Gnjilane region, allegedly under suspicion of being connected with the decision by 47 Kosovo Serb members of the Kosovo Security Force from the Gjilan/Gnjilane region to resign from the Force in early July. The Director of the Office for Kosovo and Metohija of the Government of Serbia condemned the arrests at an unscheduled news conference on the same day, as did the Serbian List, which also accused the Kosovo police of excessive force and called upon Kosovo Serbs not to join the Kosovo Security Force.

8. On 17 May, the President of Kosovo, the Prime Minister of Kosovo and the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo, Behgjet Pacolli, participated in the European Union Western Balkans Summit in Sofia. At the conclusion of the Summit, the European Union adopted a declaration in which it reaffirmed its "unequivocal support" for the region's European perspective and outlined a number of measures to be implemented by the Governments of Western Balkans countries to improve infrastructure connectivity, security and the rule of law in the region. On 10 July, Heads of Government of European Union member States and their Western Balkans partners met in London under the Berlin process. At the conclusion of the meeting, all participants in the process signed joint declarations on regional cooperation and good-neighbourly relations, war crimes and missing persons.

9. On 15 June, following a decision of the European Council and an exchange of letters between the President of Kosovo and the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Federica Mogherini, EULEX began a new, more restricted two-year mandate, with a reduced strength of 503 staff to be reached upon completion of a reconfiguration process ending on 14 December. While EULEX judges and prosecutors no longer have any executive functions in the Kosovo justice system, EULEX will monitor selected criminal and civil cases and continue to monitor, mentor and advise the Kosovo Correctional Service. EULEX will also provide operational support to the implementation of agreements reached within the framework of the European Union-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, and retain its role as second security responder.

10. In accordance with the criteria for visa liberalization for Kosovo set by the European Commission, Kosovo authorities promoted the implementation of measures to counter organized crime and corruption. The government of Kosovo also continued to implement the reforms envisaged under the Stabilization and Association Agreement between Kosovo and the European Union, including reform of the public administration sector.

11. During the reporting period, there were no reported cases of fighters suspected of departing from Kosovo for Iraq and/or the Syrian Arab Republic. However, the return of foreign fighters from conflict areas continued to be a matter of concern throughout the region. During the reporting period, several judgments related to terrorism cases were delivered. On 18 May, the Basic Court of Pristina convicted nine individuals of planning terrorist attacks during a football game between Albania and Israel in 2016 and imposed sentences ranging from 18 months to 10 years of imprisonment. On the same day, the Basic Court of Pristina acquitted five imams accused of inciting terrorist acts, owing to a lack of evidence. On 8 June, the Basic Court of Pristina ordered the detention of two individuals suspected of plotting terrorist attacks in Kosovo (one against the Kosovo Force, the other against the general public).

12. My Special Representative for Kosovo continued to engage with political leaders in Pristina, Belgrade and the region. On 7 June, he met with the President of Kosovo in Pristina. On 11, 12 and 14 June, together with the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Bi tou Keita, he met with the President of Serbia, Aleksandar Vučić, and the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Serbia, Ivica Dačić, in Belgrade, with the Prime Minister of Kosovo and the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kosovo in Pristina, and with the Prime Minister of Albania, Edi Rama, in Tirana.

III. Northern Kosovo

13. The mayor of North Mitrovica, who is also the president of the Serbian List, in a media statement of 12 April, maintained that the security situation did not allow for the reopening of the main bridge in Mitrovica to vehicular traffic. He also called for a swift signing of the memorandum of understanding on municipal boundaries between North and South Mitrovica, as foreseen in the European Union-facilitated agreement of August 2015 on the revitalization of the main bridge. In response, the mayor of South Mitrovica dismissed his counterpart's security concerns and suggested that the European Union should determine a date for reopening the bridge.

14. The investigation into the murder on 16 January of a Kosovo Serb politician, Oliver Ivanović, in North Mitrovica remained unsolved. On 16 April, Mr. Ivanović's political party, the Civic Initiative "Serbia, Democracy, Justice", expressed concern at the lack of information about developments in the investigation.

IV. Normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina

15. After a three-month hiatus, on 24 June, the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy hosted a high-level meeting of the European Union-facilitated dialogue with the President of Serbia and the President of Kosovo in Brussels. Following the three-hour meeting, in a communiqué issued by the Office of the High Representative, it was stated that the two presidents had engaged in an "intensive and productive discussion on the framework of an agreement on the comprehensive normalization of relations between the two sides". The high-level meeting was preceded, on 22 June, by meetings of the technical teams of Belgrade and Pristina, headed by the respective chief negotiators, Mr. Đurić and Avni Arifi.

16. The European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy had already met with the President of Serbia and the President of Kosovo on 16 May, in the margins of the European Union Western Balkans Summit in Sofia. Following the meeting, the European External Action Service issued a statement in which it indicated that the two leaders had both confirmed their willingness to continue intensive work with the High Representative to achieve a comprehensive normalization of relations.

17. Divergences between Belgrade and Pristina on the establishment of the association/community of Serb-majority municipalities in Kosovo, as envisaged under the First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalization of Relations (Brussels Agreement) of 19 April 2013, continued to hinder progress in the European Union-facilitated dialogue. On 18 April, the President of Serbia announced that Kosovo Serbs would not form an association/community of Serb-majority municipalities in Kosovo unilaterally, as previously envisaged, in response to the delays by Pristina in proceeding with its establishment. Instead, they agreed to wait until the end of the four-month period set by Pristina as the deadline to draft the statute

of the association/community. The following day, the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, following separate meetings with the President of Serbia and the Prime Minister of Serbia, Ana Brnabić, in Belgrade, highlighted the importance of implementing all agreements reached within the framework of the European Union-facilitated dialogue.

18. Meanwhile, the management team tasked to draft the statute of the association/community of Serb-majority municipalities held nine meetings during the period under review, but did not issue any report on its findings or conclusions.

V. Returns, reconciliation, cultural heritage and community relations

19. During the reporting period, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) recorded 77 voluntary returns to Kosovo by members of non-majority communities. This brings the total number of voluntary returns by members of non-majority communities in Kosovo since 2000 to 27,884. At present, UNHCR reports a total of 89,480 displaced persons from the 1998–1999 conflict, of which 72,000 are in Serbia, 16,357 are displaced internally throughout Kosovo, 729 are in Montenegro and 394 are in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

20. UNHCR continued to support members of the Ashkali, Egyptian and Roma communities in Kosovo in obtaining civil documentation and resolving civil status issues, which inter alia enables access to public services. During the reporting period, UNHCR assisted 105 individuals in obtaining civil documentation.

21. On 19 April, UNMIK sponsored a round table in Novobërdë/Novo Brdo municipality on the role of women in trust-building processes, which was attended by 17 Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian women from the municipality. The discussions focused on advancing the role of women in the municipality and on the need to enhance communication and trust between communities.

VI. Rule of law and human rights

22. During the reporting period, the key defendants in two corruption and organized crime cases were acquitted. On 15 May, the Court of Appeals acquitted the former President of the Constitutional Court and former Rector of the University of Pristina, Enver Hasani, of complicity in fraud. On 6 June, the Basic Court of Pristina acquitted the former Secretary of the Ministry of Health, Ilir Tolaj, of charges of abuse of official position. These acquittals were due to a lack of evidence. Previously, on 10 April, 14 prisoners, including 2 people convicted of aggravated murder, had been pardoned.

23. Two noteworthy developments related to alleged war crimes occurred during the reporting period. On 26 April, a EULEX prosecutor from the Kosovo Special Prosecution Office filed an indictment against a member of the reserve forces of the Yugoslav police or paramilitary unit, Darko Tasić, for alleged co-perpetration of war crimes against civilians in the village of Krushë e Vogël/Mala Kruša in March 1999. On 11 June, the Kosovo Constitutional Court ordered the Basic Court of Mitrovica to retry the case against 10 former members of the "Drenica Group" of the Kosovo Liberation Army who had been convicted of crimes against civilians during 1998 and 1999. The Constitutional Court sent the case for retrial after determining that the defendants' right to a fair and impartial trial had been violated in the first instance.

24. The Basic Court of Pristina, composed of EULEX judges, announced, on 24 May, a verdict in the retrial of the so-called "Medicus" case. The owner of a health-care facility, the Medicus clinic, Lutfi Dervishi, was found guilty of trafficking in persons and organized crime and sentenced to 7.5 years in prison and a fine of 8,000 euros. An anaesthesiologist, Sokol Hajdini, was sentenced to one year in prison for "serious bodily injury".

25. The reporting period also witnessed developments at the Kosovo Specialist Chambers. The appointment of Jack Smith as Specialist Prosecutor was announced on 7 May, while the appointment of Pietro Spera as Ombudsperson was announced on 18 May. The first report of the Specialist Chambers and the Specialist Prosecutor's Office was published on 14 June. The report highlights achievements from April 2016 to February 2018 and describes the process that was followed to build the regulatory framework of the Specialist Chambers, strengthen outreach and establish the Specialist Prosecutor's Office.

26. To date, 1,647 persons remain unaccounted for following the 1998–1999 conflict in Kosovo. On 16 May, EULEX and the Kosovo Institute of Forensic Medicine concluded an assessment of a mass grave site in Gjakovë/Đakovica. Five human remains were exhumed from the site, and DNA testing was ongoing at the end of the reporting period.

27. Further to sustained advocacy by the Missing Persons Resource Centre, with support from UNMIK, on 21 May, the Kosovo Government Commission on Missing Persons appointed a representative of families of missing persons from a non-majority community, Milorad Trifunović. The inclusion of non-majority communities in the Commission will help to ensure their participation throughout the process of clarifying the fate of persons who went missing following the conflict in Kosovo.

28. In May, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), established the Transitional Justice Resource Centre at the University of Pristina, the first centre of its kind in Kosovo. The centre aims to promote peacebuilding, reconciliation and the role of education in transitional justice processes, with a focus on gender-sensitive approaches.

29. The Jahjaga Foundation, with support from UNMIK, UN-Women and UNDP, began to implement a project to counter the stigma surrounding survivors of conflict-related sexual violence in Kosovo. From 22 to 24 June, the foundation organized a gathering of 200 victims of conflict-related sexual violence from Kosovo in Albania, including victims from non-majority communities. The event, which was funded by UNMIK, explored ways to assist victims and provided an opportunity for them to obtain support without fear of stigmatization. UNMIK will continue to address the social, psychological and economic needs of victims of conflict-related sexual violence by supporting local organizations.

30. On 27 April, the Ombudsperson Institution in Kosovo issued a report on the case of six Turkish nationals who had been arrested by the Kosovo authorities and expelled to Turkey on 29 March. The report concluded that Kosovo institutions had violated the Constitution in arresting and expelling the Turkish citizens.

VII. Women and peace and security

31. As part of its efforts to promote the role of women in trust-building, on 15 and 16 May, UNMIK sponsored a conference on the roles of women in trust-building processes organized by two non-governmental organizations from South and North Mitrovica. About 40 participants from local communities discussed challenges and

opportunities for women in achieving gender equality. Similarly, on 1 and 2 June, UNMIK, in collaboration with UNDP and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, supported a workshop on gender-responsive planning and budgeting at the municipal level for the Zveçan/Zvečan women's caucus. The workshop, which was also attended by municipal assembly members and officials from the Serb-majority municipality of Zveçan/Zvečan and the Albanian-majority municipality of Kamenicë/Kamenica, offered an opportunity for Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serb majority municipalities to share information and experiences.

32. On 14 June, UN-Women brought together female members of parliament from Serbia and Kosovo and female decision makers from South-Eastern Europe at a regional round table on women, regional cooperation and European integration. They identified ways for women to play a central role in peacebuilding, especially with regard to the implementation of the Brussels Agreement.

VIII. Partnerships and cooperation

33. UNMIK, in close collaboration with the United Nations Kosovo Team, continued to implement programmatic activities in the areas of the rule of law, intercommunity trust-building, human rights, youth empowerment and gender. During the reporting period, UNMIK and the United Nations Office for Project Services supported efforts to reduce the backlog of cases at the Basic Court of Pristina and the Basic Court of Mitrovica by sponsoring Kosovo Albanian and Kosovo Serb legal interns. UNMIK and the United Nations Office for Project Services also partnered to provide simultaneous translation equipment for the same two courts to help to ensure compliance with language rights, a key challenge throughout the ongoing integration of the judiciary. Other activities included the provision of technical assistance to the Ombudsperson Institution in northern Kosovo and the implementation of seven projects to increase the capacity of the Kosovo police to monitor the security situation and address urban safety concerns.

34. From 27 to 29 April, UNMIK and the Kosovo Youth Task Force brought together members of local youth action councils from 20 municipalities in Kosovo to develop joint advocacy strategies. Subsequently, on 14 and 15 May, UNMIK, in collaboration with the United Nations Kosovo Team, organized the second Kosovo Youth Assembly, bringing together 210 young people from all communities, alongside representatives of Kosovo institutions, international organizations and civil society. Participants reviewed the implementation of the road map developed by the previous Youth Assembly and proposed solutions to youth-related issues raised at the United Nations Kosovo Trust-Building Forum, held in Ljubljana from 6 to 8 May.

35. My Special Representative for Kosovo and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations chaired the United Nations Kosovo Trust-Building Forum, which was organized by UNMIK and the United Nations Kosovo Team, with the participation of the European Union, EULEX and the OSCE Mission in Kosovo. The 120 participants, more than half of whom were women, represented a broad cross section of Kosovo society, including leaders from municipal administrations, civil society, academia, women's and youth organizations and the Ministry of Communities and Returns of Kosovo. They identified avenues to build greater trust between communities in Kosovo and established a platform for future action in the following six fields: (a) good governance and access to services; (b) access to justice; (c) interreligious trust-building; (d) economic empowerment and environment; (e) media and communications; and (f) education. Cross-cutting issues included human rights, the empowerment of women, youth and language rights.

36. During the reporting period, two confidence-building measures were implemented with support from UNMIK. On 21 May, the mayor of Gjilan/Gnjilane municipality inaugurated a new market near the Serbian Orthodox Church in the municipality, which is expected to boost trade and interaction between the local Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian communities. On 27 May, Kosovo Serb and Kosovo Albanian youth participated in a joint river-cleaning initiative in Brezovicë/Brezovica, in Shtërpcë/Štrpce municipality, and took advantage of the initiative to discuss ways to promote intercommunity communication. As part of a visit to Dragash/Dragaš municipality that included a meeting with the mayor, on 12 July, my Special Representative for Kosovo inaugurated a multipurpose sports field, which had been built earlier in 2018 with support from UNMIK.

37. UNMIK continued to provide document certification services. During the reporting period, 845 documents were processed, including 543 relating to pensions and 304 to civil status, such as high school and university diplomas, and marriage, birth and death certificates. UNMIK also continued to facilitate liaison between the Kosovo authorities and the International Criminal Police Organization. UNMIK received and processed 20 requests for the issuance of international wanted notices.

IX. Observations

38. I welcome the resumption of the high-level European Union-facilitated dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, with the latest meeting facilitated by the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy on 24 June in Brussels. While that meeting did not break new ground, the resumption of the dialogue process provides a renewed opportunity to address long-standing differences, which is fundamental to any sustainable solution. I encourage leaders in Pristina and Belgrade to continue to advance their mutual engagement, including towards the full implementation of the agreements reached within the framework of the European Union-facilitated dialogue.

39. The roadworks attempted within the special protective zone of the Visoki Dečani monastery on 26 March remain a matter of concern. The Law on Special Protective Zones and the conclusions of the Implementation and Monitoring Council, charged with overseeing all construction in and management of the special protective zones, must be upheld. I commend the efforts of the international community to speak out in a single voice against possible transgressions.

40. I note with increasing concern that, six months on, the investigation into the murder on 16 January of a Kosovo Serb politician, Oliver Ivanović, in broad daylight in Mitrovica remains unsolved. I call upon the Kosovo authorities to intensify their investigations, making use of all available channels of assistance.

41. With the recent conclusion of the judicial executive functions of EULEX and the departure of international judges and prosecutors from Kosovo, the Kosovo authorities will soon be responsible for all investigations, prosecutions and trials of serious crimes. Kosovo police, prosecutors, defence counsels, judges and other court personnel will require support to address a large backlog of cases, including hundreds of war crimes cases. I note that an independent, efficient and professional judiciary is essential for the peaceful resolution of disputes and public confidence in the administration of justice.

42. I appreciate the strong statements issued by political leaders in Pristina in response to several crimes perceived as ethnically motivated. Regardless of the motives behind individual incidents, public confidence in the objectivity and effectiveness of the institutions demands such active leadership.

43. I commend all participants in the United Nations Kosovo Trust-Building Forum, hosted by my Special Representative for Kosovo and the Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations from 6 to 8 May. They have set forth an ambitious set of recommendations in the priority areas identified, and I look forward to the active engagement of all stakeholders concerned, including the United Nations, in bringing these recommendations to full realization.

44. I reiterate my call for contributions to the trust fund to support the Ashkali, Egyptian and Roma communities affected by lead poisoning in Kosovo. Contributions to the trust fund will support the implementation of projects addressing the most pressing needs of these vulnerable communities, including in the areas of health, economic development and infrastructure.

45. I thank my Special Representative for Kosovo and UNMIK staff for the energy, creativity and commitment that they have put into the work of the Mission. I also acknowledge the dedication shown by the United Nations Kosovo Team, under the guidance of the newly arrived Development Coordinator, and its renewed efforts to work in collaboration with UNMIK in delivering as one United Nations. Furthermore, I note with appreciation that the European Union and the Kosovo authorities have agreed upon the next phase of the work of EULEX. Finally, I reiterate my gratitude to the long-standing partners of the United Nations in Kosovo, namely, the Kosovo Force, the European Union presences and OSCE, for their outstanding teamwork and collaboration with UNMIK.

Annex I

Report of the European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the Secretary-General on the activities of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo from 16 April to 15 July 2018

1. Summary

On 14 June, the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) completed its two-year mandate and received a new mandate until 14 June 2020. The Mission will continue to support relevant rule-of-law institutions on their path towards increased effectiveness, sustainability, multi-ethnicity and accountability, free from political interference and in full compliance with European Union best practices. While EULEX judges and prosecutors have withdrawn from the local justice system, the Mission will monitor selected cases and trials in the criminal and civil justice areas in Kosovo and will continue to monitor, mentor and advise the Kosovo Correctional Service.

The selection process for senior positions in the judiciary continues to pose challenges. However, there has been an improvement in the efficiency of the court system, in particular with the increase in the scheduling of hearings.

In the framework of its monitoring, mentoring and advising activities, the Mission continued to focus its efforts in particular on the Kosovo Correctional Service, which has again suffered from political interference and the preferential treatment of a select group of high-profile prisoners.

EULEX also provided monitoring, mentoring and advising in response to the investigation of the murder of the prominent Kosovo Serb politician, Oliver Ivanović.

2. Activities of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo

2.1. Executive

Organized crime and corruption

On 17 April, a EULEX prosecutor filed at the Basic Court of Mitrovica an indictment against six defendants charged with unauthorized possession of weapons, facilitating or compelling prostitution, trading in influence, fraud and falsifying documents.

On 24 May, a panel of one local judge and two EULEX judges at the Basic Court of Pristina announced its verdict against two defendants in the "Medicus" case of trafficking in human organs. One defendant was found guilty of organized crime in connection with trafficking in persons and sentenced to 7.5 years of imprisonment and a fine of 8,000 euros. The other was found guilty of grievous bodily harm and sentenced to one year of imprisonment.

On 8 June, the Constitutional Court issued a ruling declaring as invalid the judgment of the Supreme Court in the so-called "Drenica II" case, in which high-profile defendants had been found guilty of war crimes. The Constitutional Court ruled that the Supreme Court had violated the applicants' right to a fair and impartial trial and ordered that the case be remanded to the Supreme Court for reconsideration. The two EULEX judges issued a joint dissenting opinion disagreeing with the decision of the majority of judges of the Constitutional Court.

War crimes

On 26 April, a EULEX prosecutor filed at the Basic Court of Prizren an indictment against a defendant charged with committing war crimes in the village of Krushë e Vogël/Mala Kruša from 25 to 27 March 1999.

On 16 May, a panel of three EULEX judges at the Basic Court of Mitrovica passed a verdict in a war crimes case against one defendant. The panel acquitted the defendant of all charges as it could not be proved that he had committed the acts with which he was charged. On 25 May, a panel of three EULEX judges at the Basic Court of Mitrovica announced its verdict in another war crimes case against the same defendant. The panel found the defendant guilty of one of the counts of war crimes with which he was charged and sentenced him to 6.5 years of imprisonment.

Handover of cases and case files

EULEX continued to hand over cases, case files and evidence to relevant Kosovo institutions. EULEX prosecutors handed over cases and case files to the Special Prosecution Office of Kosovo and the Basic Prosecution Office of Mitrovica. Meanwhile, EULEX judges continued to transfer cases to local counterparts.

Institute of Forensic Medicine

From 16 April to 16 May, EULEX forensic experts conducted an exhumation in Gjakovë/Đakovica. Six bodily remains were found.

EULEX facilitated a workshop for Kosovo prosecutors on interview technique skills for war crimes witnesses and victims, with a focus on sexual and gender-based violence cases.

EULEX organized a training workshop aimed at enhancing the capacity of local prosecutors in their joint work with the police and other law enforcement agencies in Mitrovica to combat and investigate corruption and related crimes.

EULEX, together with the police of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, delivered a course on public order and public safety contingencies to Kosovo police officers.

EULEX facilitated the second in a series of meetings of the operational working group on cooperation between police, prosecutors and forensic experts on cases of sexual and gender-based violence, chaired by the Chief Prosecutor of the Basic Prosecution Office of Ferizaj/Uroševac.

2.2. Strengthening

Case monitoring

Challenges to the efficiency of the court system remain, in particular in the areas of immediate adjournments of court hearings, late commencement and unduly prolonged sessions, often due to the unannounced and unjustified absence of parties, resulting in unproductive hearings, namely, hearings in which nothing substantial occurs. Over the past months, however, the percentage of unproductive hearings has decreased on average, and there has been an overall increase in the scheduling of hearings.

Judiciary

The selection process for senior positions of the judiciary continues to pose notable challenges. On 30 May, the Kosovo Judicial Council appointed supervisory judges for the Kamenicë/Kamenica branch and the Novobërdë/Novo Brdo branch of

the Basic Court of Gjilan/Gnjilane, as well as the Leposaviq/Leposavić branch of the Basic Court of Mitrovica. It also appointed an acting supervisory judge for the Zubin Potok branch of the Basic Court of Mitrovica. EULEX expressed its concerns over the selection process, as the Kosovo Judicial Council ignored the applicable regulation and failed to publicly discuss the candidates' evaluations before proceeding to the voting process.

Additional challenges include the need to overcome inconsistencies and contradictions in the legislative framework for the judiciary, the reform of disciplinary proceedings against judges and prosecutors, as well as the integration of the judiciary in the north. The Law on the Kosovo Judicial Council and the Law on Courts have been amended twice since their adoption in 2010, once in 2015 and again in 2018, requiring the drafting of new regulations related to the currently pending amendments, as well as additional changes to the existing regulations.

On 6 June, the Kosovo Assembly approved the draft criminal code on its first reading, while the review of the criminal procedure code is still ongoing at the Ministry of Justice. The finalization of the amendment process of the criminal legal framework, namely, the criminal code, and the criminal procedure code, the Law on the Execution of Penal Sanctions and other interrelated laws in the process, is of crucial importance in overcoming obstacles to the practical implementation of the legislation and in aligning it with legislation and best practices of the European Union, including other international law instruments. Through the legislative review mechanism, EULEX provided substantial comments on the framework, proposing concrete amendments to the existing provisions, with detailed reasoning for each proposal.

The poor performance of the Office of the Disciplinary Counsel and its lack of accountability towards the Kosovo Judicial Council and the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council resulted in the need for a reform of the disciplinary system. For this reason, EULEX recommended that the implementation of the Law on the Disciplinary Liability of Judges and Prosecutors be closely monitored, with a particular focus on the transition to the new system and the inventory of ongoing cases.

Regarding the judiciary integration in the north, the main challenges lie in improving working conditions, including recruiting a sufficient number of translators and interpreters with a command of Albanian and Serbian, the inventory of cases adopted from the parallel system and the implementation of the conclusions supplementing the First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalization of Relations.

Kosovo Correctional Service

On 27 April, a new Director General of the Kosovo Correctional Service was appointed, an important development considering that a permanent Director General had been lacking since 2015. The selection process, monitored by EULEX, was conducted in compliance with relevant procedures and requirements. Staffing and the reorganization of staffing pose an immense problem to the efficiency of the Kosovo Correctional Service. After many years of a considerable number of staff being in acting positions, the Kosovo Correctional Service finally opened internal vacancies for supervisors, senior supervisors and heads of units in May. The testing and interviewing process is ongoing.

In view of the lack of female representation at the management level of the Kosovo Correctional Service, EULEX organized a two-day workshop on 28 and 29 May for 50 female correction officers, with a view to strengthening their capacities, discussing their roles and challenges, and encouraging them to apply for higher positions.

Regarding the preferential treatment of a select group of high-profile prisoners, EULEX monitored several hospitalizations of a known high-profile prisoner during the months of April and May, finding varying degrees of professionalism and application of security measures and standards, depending on the officer of the Kosovo Correctional Service on duty.

Following EULEX advice on the persistent problem of contraband in the Dubrava Correctional Centre, search operations were intensified, resulting in a substantial increase in the overall amount of contraband being found. However, in order for these efforts to be sustainable in the long term, the Kosovo Correctional Service needs to provide support and coordination across all its facilities.

Kosovo police

On 17 and 18 May, representatives of the police forces of Albania, Croatia, Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo participated in a conference of regional chiefs of police in Pristina, hosted by the Kosovo police and facilitated by EULEX. The conference was organized to promote regional cooperation, following the successful conference of chiefs of police held in Skopje in September 2016. The main focus of the most recent conference was the assessment of strategic risks and threats to regional peace and stability posed by transnational organized crime, terrorism and migration.

Capacity-building

Enabled by EULEX, the Kosovo police conducted a study visit to Sweden in order to strengthen the executive capacity of its international law enforcement unit and to enhance its operational performance, in particular when focusing on data protection and data security.

While Kosovo police specialized units, with EULEX support, have achieved an operational level that reaches European and international rules-based standards, there is still a need to improve their capacities with respect to policing and public safety contingencies for major sporting events. This is particularly relevant in view of the admission of Kosovo to the Fédération Internationale de Football Association and the Union of European Football Associations in 2016. In an effort to support Kosovo police in respect of their obligations, in particular in relation to article 2 of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, EULEX facilitated, in April, an eight-day senior command course, presented by four trainers from the police of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Lincolnshire police). The Kosovo police commanders were provided with the opportunity to enhance their current skills and expertise when dealing with spontaneous and pre-planned events that require public order and public safety contingencies.

Police Inspectorate of Kosovo

The effective investigation of high-ranking officers remains a challenge for the Police Inspectorate of Kosovo, such as in the ongoing case of the Kosovo Police Director of the Economic Crime Unit, as well as the cases of the 59 police officers detained for corruption and the 148 police officers who have been listed for fraud. The reluctance of prosecutors to open cases against high-ranking Kosovo police officers and slow court processes add to the number of unsolved cases.

Migration

Concerns in the area of migration centre on the lack of real-time exchange of precise and detailed criminal background information on forced returnees who pose

potential risks to public security. In addition, better data exchange is highly recommended inter alia with European Union institutions in order to trace asylum seekers using Kosovo as a transit route to reach Western Europe. In the field of law-making, two important laws, on which EULEX advised, have entered into force: the Law on Foreigners, on 18 May, and the Law on Asylum, on 30 May.

European Union-facilitated dialogue

The new Minister of Internal Affairs appointed a new Integrated Border Management National Coordinator, promising progress in the implementation of the integrated border management strategy and the development plan for the National Centre for Border Management.

However, as there has been no recent activity in the European Union-facilitated dialogue, no notable progress has been made on the implementation of the freedom of movement agreement and the integrated border management technical protocol. EULEX continued to visit all six common crossing points on the dates of local-level meetings, and, although the two sides do not meet formally, the atmosphere in general remains convivial, and there is a degree of operational cooperation at all common crossing points.

No progress has been made with regard to the establishment of the three common crossing points to be hosted by Belgrade. Regarding the common crossing points to be hosted by Pristina, the construction of the common crossing points of Merdarë/Merdare and Mutivodë/Mutivode is ongoing, while there is no progress with regard to the common crossing point of Bërnjak/Tabalije owing to the still unresolved issue of the relocation of the overhead power lines.

3. Other key issues

Nothing significant to report.

Annex II

Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office

The Specialist Chambers continued to hone its readiness for judicial activities in the reporting period by increasing the number of counsel on the lists of defence counsel and victims' counsel to 89 and by appointing, on 18 May, Pietro Spera (Italy) as Ombudsperson for the Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office, further ensuring compliance with the highest human rights standards. The Ombudsperson has a unique mandate and role in monitoring, defending and protecting the fundamental rights and freedoms of persons interacting with the Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office, though he may intervene in judicial proceedings only in case of unreasonable delay.

The Specialist Chambers continued its intensive outreach activities to explain its mandate and foster direct communications with affected communities. From 24 to 26 April, representatives of the Specialist Chambers travelled to Kosovo to engage in outreach activities with non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, journalists and lawyers.

In May, following the publication of the updated list of counsel, all counsel admitted to the list were contacted to encourage them to swiftly establish an independent representative body for all counsel admitted to practice before the Specialist Chambers.

From 14 to 17 May, the Registrar of the Specialist Chambers made her first official visit to Serbia, holding meetings with numerous civil society organizations and potential partners. The Registrar also briefed a number of officials, including the Head of the United Nations Office in Belgrade, the Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Serbia and the Head of the Mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to Serbia on the progress made by the Specialist Chambers and the scaling up of outreach activities in Serbia.

From 6 to 8 June, the Specialist Chambers welcomed representatives from 15 non-governmental organizations from Kosovo and Serbia to an outreach workshop in The Hague. The workshop sought to gather feedback from civil society on the outreach programme of the Specialist Chambers and to produce concrete ideas on how to improve and further develop future outreach activities in the region.

In June, the Specialist Chambers and the Specialist Prosecutor's Office issued their first report, covering the period from the establishment of the Specialist Chambers, in April 2016, to February 2018. The report is available to the public on the website of the Specialist Chambers in Albanian, English and Serbian (with a Cyrillic version also being prepared).

During the reporting period, the Specialist Chambers judges continued to prepare for forthcoming judicial activities. From April to June, a working group of three judges of the Specialist Chambers prepared a green paper on the efficient management of proceedings, focusing on the role and responsibility of judges in managing proceedings, case management issues arising during the various stages of proceedings and the efficient management of concrete procedural issues. All judges provided substantive comments on the green paper. Furthermore, a judge of the Specialist Chamber of the Constitutional Court, in consultation with the other three judges, prepared a green paper on the jurisprudence of the Kosovo Constitutional Court, identifying case law of Kosovo and the European Court of Human Rights relevant to the work of the Specialist Chambers. The green paper was subsequently shared with all judges.

On 8 June, the Council of the European Union approved the next budget for the Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office through the award of a grant to the Specialist Chambers, which the Registrar signed on 25 June. In its decision, the Council provides for a two-year budget until 14 June 2020, rather than an annual budget.

On 11 and 12 June, in order to enhance their legal knowledge, the judges participated in a colloquium hosted in collaboration with the Ecole nationale de la magistrature in Paris. Presentations by external speakers and the subsequent discussions focused on subject matters relevant to the future judicial work of the Specialist Chambers.

On 26 June, continuing to provide for increased staff capacity, the Specialist Chambers closed the latest call for 59 new staff members for the Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office and immediately commenced the next stages of the recruitment process with a view to the rapid deployment of the required staff.

From 9 to 12 July, representatives from the Specialist Chambers travelled to Kosovo to engage in outreach activities, including a round table with journalists, meetings with civil society organizations and an outreach update event for the diplomatic community. The Specialist Chambers hosted 17 group visits in The Hague through its visitors' programme.

The Specialist Chambers continues to engage with the host State in order to facilitate its work, including in relation to the renovation of the future premises of the court in The Hague.

The engagement of the Specialist Chambers with individual European Union member States, third contributing States and other States remains ongoing and is highly focused on garnering support for cooperation on witness protection and the enforcement of sentences.

A prosecutor from the United States of America, Jack Smith, who has experience in both high-level political investigations and international criminal investigations, was appointed Specialist Prosecutor on 7 May, following a selection process organized by the European Union. He succeeded David Schwendiman, the first Specialist Prosecutor and formerly the Lead Prosecutor of the Special Investigative Task Force, who left the office at the end of March, when his term as a Senior Foreign Service Officer in the United States State Department expired. Mr. Smith is scheduled to take office in August. In the interim, the Deputy Specialist Prosecutor, Kwai Hong Ip, has led the investigation into the allegations contained in the report of January 2011 of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly entitled "Inhuman treatment of people and illicit trafficking in human organs".

Under the special law, the Specialist Chambers has primacy over all other courts in Kosovo. The Specialist Prosecutor has, among other things, the authority to call upon Kosovo institutions to assist him. In addition, EULEX is, under its new mandate, providing logistical and operational support to the Specialist Prosecutor's Office. As the investigation moves forward, such assistance, as well as that of the Belgrade authorities, the European Union and the wider international community, will become increasingly important. The Specialist Prosecutor's Office requires the continued engagement and full support of the international community, international organizations and individual States in all its activities.

Annex III

Composition and strength of the police component of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

(as at 15 July 2018)

Country	*Number*
Austria	1
Bulgaria	1
Finland	1
Germany	1
Hungary	2
Russian Federation	2
Turkey	1
Total	**9**

Composition and strength of the military liaison component of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

(as at 15 July 2018)

Country	*Number*
Czechia	2
Poland	1
Republic of Moldova	1
Romania	1
Turkey	1
Ukraine	2
Total	**8**

UNMIK
July 2018
Operational boundary
International boundary
National capital
Republic capital or provincial capital
Town, village
Mountain pass
Major road
Secondary road
Railroad
0 5 10 15 20 25 km
0 5 10 15 mi
SERBIA
MONTENEGRO
Kosovo
ALBANIA
THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA
HUNGARY
CROATIA
ROMANIA
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
BULGARIA
ITALY
GREECE
HQ UNMIK UNMIK HQ
HQ MLC Military Liaison Component HQ
MLT Military Liaison Team
UNMIK perimeter of operations
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
Map No. 4133 Rev. 76 UNITED NATIONS
July 2018 (Colour)
Department of Field Support
Geospatial Information Section (formerly Cartographic Section)

United Nations S/2018/748

Security Council

Distr.: General
30 July 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 30 July 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Myanmar to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

With reference to my letter dated 20 July 2018, I have the honour to inform you that the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar has today announced the establishment of the Independent Commission of Inquiry as part of its national initiative to address reconciliation, peace, stability and development in Rakhine State. The Commission comprises the following personalities:

- **Rosario Manalo** (Chair)
  Former Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines
  Former Chair and current Representative of the Philippines to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
- **U Mya Thein** (member)
  Former Chair of the constitutional tribunal of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar
- **Kenzo Oshima** (member)
  Former Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator
  Former Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations
- **Aung Tun Thet** (member)
  Former Senior Official, United Nations Children's Fund
  Former Principal Officer, United Nations System Staff College

The main purpose of the Commission is to investigate the allegations of human rights violations and related issues following the terrorist attacks by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army. The Commission will be assisted by both national and international legal and technical experts.

I would highly appreciate it if the present letter would be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Hau Do **Suan**
Permanent Representative

18-12603 (E) 010818

Please recycle

United Nations S/2018/749

Security Council

Distr.: General
31 July 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 30 July 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to submit herewith a Chair's summary, compiled as a courtesy by the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations, summarizing the ideas expressed by the participants in the Security Council debate on 11 July 2018 on the subject "Understanding and addressing climate-related security risks" (see annex).

We hope that the summary will serve as an inspiration and support for our collective efforts to tackle climate change and address climate-related security risks.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex would be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Olof **Skoog**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative

18-12662 (E) 020818

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 30 July 2018 from the Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Chair's summary of the debate of the Security Council held on 11 July 2018 on the subject "Understanding and addressing climate-related security risks"

Introduction

The debate of the Security Council on the subject "Understanding and addressing climate-related security risks", which was held on 11 July 2018, was organized by Sweden as President of the Security Council for the month of July. The meeting was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden and President of the Security Council, Margot Wallström. The Council heard briefings by the Deputy Secretary-General, Amina Mohammed, the Minister of Water Resources of Iraq, Hassan Janabi, and a representative of the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change, Hindou Ibrahim. In addition to Security Council members, Nauru, Maldives, Trinidad and Tobago and the Sudan spoke under rule 37, representing groups of affected countries.

This was the third time that the Security Council had considered aspects of peace and security related to climate change. An open debate on this theme was organized in 2007 under the presidency of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and another open debate on the impact of climate change was held in 2011, organized under the presidency of Germany. In conjunction with the latter, the Security Council adopted a statement by the President of the Council (S/PRST/2011/15) in which it expressed concern that "possible adverse effects of climate change may, in the long run, aggravate certain existing threats to international peace and security" and noted the importance of including conflict analysis on the possible security implications of climate change in the reporting of the Secretary-General, "when such issues are drivers of conflict, represent a challenge to the implementation of Council mandates or endanger the process of consolidation of peace". During 2017 and 2018, the Council has increasingly recognized the adverse effects of climate change and ecological changes on stability in country-specific and regional contexts, including in the Lake Chad basin region (resolution 2349 (2017)), Somalia (resolution 2408 (2018)), West Africa and the Sahel (S/PRST/2018/3), Mali (resolution 2423 (2018)) and Darfur (resolution 2429 (2018)). In several of those contexts, the Council has emphasized the need for adequate risk assessments and risk management strategies.

The aim of the debate on 11 July was to reflect on how climate-related security risks may affect the stability and security of countries and regions and to develop a shared understanding of the risks at play. The debate also provided an opportunity to reflect and elaborate on what the Council has done to address these issues and what more is needed for the Council to more effectively assess and address climate-related security risks going forward. Recognizing that the primary responsibility for addressing climate change clearly falls within the mandate of other United Nations bodies, the focus of the debate was exclusively on the security implications of climate change.

This non-paper, compiled as a courtesy by the Permanent Mission of Sweden, is a summary of the different ideas expressed by the participants during the open debate. It does not represent an endorsement of the proposals or of their content by any Member State or participant. It will be circulated to all members of the Security Council.

Briefings

In her briefing to the Security Council, the Deputy Secretary-General noted that climate change is a real threat which is proceeding at a relentless pace and that it is inextricably linked to some of the most pressing security challenges of our time. She emphasized that the world's most vulnerable and marginalized people face the greatest risk.

Referring to the multidimensional nature of the crisis in the Lake Chad basin region, the Deputy Secretary-General noted the complex relationship between climate change and conflict. She advised that climate security-risk assessments and reporting from the local, national and regional levels should be considered as an early warning for conflict prevention: "we must understand climate change as one issue in a web of factors that can lead to and exacerbate conflict". She furthermore described the impact of climate change as a threat multiplier that puts additional stress on existing political, social and economic pressures.

The Deputy Secretary-General updated the Security Council on some of the ongoing efforts to tackle climate risks and emphasized that "the United Nations system takes seriously its responsibility to provide integrated analysis to the Security Council as it discusses those issues". She voiced her determination to fully mobilize the United Nations capacity to better understand and respond to climate-related security risks at all levels. To this end, the Secretariat was enhancing climate-related security-risk assessments and management strategies. The Deputy Secretary-General said, "We are strengthening our capacity to understand the impact of climate change on security, to integrate our findings into assessment and planning processes and to better coordinate efforts between system entities." The forthcoming report on the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel was mentioned as an example of reporting on the climate-security nexus. Furthermore, the Deputy Secretary-General pointed out the importance of putting women and youth at the heart of efforts, since the impact of climate change was disproportionally felt by women. At the international level, the United Nations could play a role by facilitating coordination and ensuring that climate-related frameworks are linked. The Deputy Secretary-General said that she counted on the Security Council to do its part.

The Minister of Water Resources of Iraq, Hassan Janabi, described the debate as a step forward with regard to international responses to new and emerging challenges. He described how the combined effect of climate change consequences, including the decline in rainfall and snowfall, had triggered desertification, shrinking green cover and rising temperatures, while reducing land productivity in Iraq. Climate change and water depletion were destroying soil fertility and causing food insecurity across the whole region, causing the displacement of rural populations.

Ms. Ibrahim spoke on behalf of the International Indigenous Peoples' Forum on Climate Change and urged the Security Council to address climate change as a security risk. She stated that 90 per cent of the economy in the Sahel region relied on agriculture and pastoralism, and described how a heat wave and drought immediately affected people's lives. She further added that terrorist groups took advantage of increasing poverty to recruit young people.

Climate-related threats to peace and security

Several members of the Council spoke of how the effects of climate change and rising temperatures exacerbated other risks and threats and increased their complexity and intensity. Climate change was referred to as a "threat multiplier" and a real factor that already threatens lives and livelihoods around the world.

While noting that the adverse impact of climate change does not automatically result in conflict, a clear majority of Council members pointed out how it brings in its wake a range of direct and indirect consequences that shape security landscapes. It shrinks the availability of resources, which can lead to competition and risk raising tensions, including cross-border conflicts. Instances of drought and water scarcity, it was noted, could compound demographic shifts, displacement and food insecurity. It was said that greater competition over scarce resources would furthermore test the resilience of institutions and governance structures.

Several members of the Council noted that developing countries bore the brunt of the effects of climate change. In some regions, climate change represented an existential threat because of rising sea levels, and in other instances led to the loss of biodiversity and food insecurity, often affecting already vulnerable communities.

Several speakers referred to the situation in the Lake Chad basin region as an example of where the impact of climate change could create fertile ground for the activities of extremist groups, as they took advantage of poverty to recruit the youngest and most fragile. This was especially true where Boko Haram and other criminal networks had taken root.

It was stated in the debate that many people around the world had been forced to migrate, fleeing storms, droughts, floods and desertification, or because their traditional livelihoods, such as fishing and farming, had evaporated. It was also noted that migration could increase the potential for instability, particularly in situations of resource scarcity.

Some Council members pointed out that the Security Council does not have a mandate to address climate change. Several other members stressed that it is within the purview of the Council to consider all risks that have an impact on international peace and security, including climate change.

Policy recommendations

Several speakers noted that it had been seven years since the Council last debated climate and security and that it was high time to step up efforts, beginning with an increased understanding of how climate change interacts with drivers of conflict.

However, as was noted by several Council members, combating climate change required strengthened international cooperation, including enhanced coordination and mobilization of all relevant United Nations organizations. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change provides the primary United Nations platform for responding to the phenomenon of climate change (and each United Nations agency and department must operate within its area of responsibility). It was noted that the Council should strengthen and harmonize its coordination and analysis with those United Nations bodies and agencies charged with addressing the impacts of climate change at large, not least at the country level.

While several recommendations that were put forward during the debate related to efforts to combat climate change, the following section attempts to summarize and synthesize the specific ideas and recommendations that focused specifically on addressing climate-related security risks.

- The Security Council and the United Nations system as a whole need a better understanding of climate-related security risks and the threats that they pose to international peace and security.
- The Council should encourage early and proactive action by the United Nations system through greater analytical capability, improved conflict analysis and

early warning. This would enable better-informed and more timely decision-making in response to warning signs of climate-related security risks.

- In order to fully take into account climate risks in relevant processes, there is a need for improved climate-related security risk assessments and management strategies as requested by the Security Council. Access to reliable data about climate change-related risks is key to avoiding conflicts and sustaining peace.
- The United Nations system must develop improved reporting on the issue. Information on climate-related security risks should be included in the reports of the Secretary-General to the Council, including reports pertaining to situations on the agenda of the Council, in order to provide the Council with the relevant information it needs to fulfil its mandate.
- The Security Council should regularly consider climate-related security risks in its deliberations on relevant country-specific situations.
- There is a need to establish an institutional home for climate and security-related issues within the United Nations system. This would fill a critical gap within the United Nations system and ensure more coordinated action across the Organization. Some speakers called for the appointment of a special representative on climate and security.
- The United Nations should increase the use of diplomatic means to solve resource scarcity issues, including through "climate diplomacy" and similar initiatives intended to create an environment of trust and cooperation.
- Stronger international cooperation is needed to support national capacity to address climate-related security issues. This includes financing, capacity-building and technology transfer, as well as investing in local and rural development to enhance resilience. Such efforts should draw upon experiences and good practices from affected countries.
- There is a need to facilitate increased regional, subregional and cross-border cooperation on climate-related security risks.

Conclusion

Climate change represents one of the gravest current global challenges. The debate in the Security Council on 11 July underlined the need to take the security challenges related to the adverse impacts of climate change seriously and to intensify international cooperation. For the Security Council, with its mandate to maintain international peace and security, it is imperative to fully understand and consider these risks in order to carry out its function.

Sustaining peace and addressing the drivers and root causes of conflict requires an integrated approach that brings together peace and security, sustainable development and human rights. This is in line with ongoing United Nations reforms under the leadership of the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General towards more proactive and integrated ways of working. The Secretary-General's climate summit in 2019 also represents a critical moment for the United Nations system to make progress on those issues. The debate emphasized the need for the international community to step up its overall efforts to tackle climate change and sent a clear message to the Security Council, and the rest of the United Nations system, to intensify efforts to establish the capacities and practices to address climate-related security risks. In order to deliver international peace and security, climate risks cannot be ignored.

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Security Council

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31 July 2018

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Letter dated 30 July 2018 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

In a letter dated 23 July 2018 addressed to me, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Emigrants of Lebanon requested that the Security Council extend the mandate of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) for a further period of one year, without amendment. In that regard, and further to my report to the Council of 13 July 2018 on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2018/703), I hereby request that the Council consider the renewal of the mandate of UNIFIL, which is due to expire on 31 August 2018.

I commend the continued commitment of both the Lebanese Armed Forces and the Israel Defense Forces in maintaining the cessation of hostilities, as well as their close cooperation and coordination with UNIFIL. The continued period of relative calm and stability in southern Lebanon and along the Blue Line provides a window of opportunity for progress towards a permanent ceasefire and a long-term solution to the conflict, as called for in resolution 1701 (2006).

At the same time, both parties have yet to fulfil their respective obligations under the resolution. Israel must withdraw its forces from Lebanese territory and cease violations of Lebanese airspace. The Government of Lebanon must exercise effective authority over all Lebanese territory, prevent hostile actions from its territory, ensure the safety and security of the civilian population, in addition to that of United Nations personnel, and ensure the disarmament of all armed groups so that there will be no weapons or authority in Lebanon other than that of the Lebanese State. The presence of unauthorized weapons outside of State control, coupled with bellicose rhetoric from both sides, heightens the risk of miscalculation and escalation into conflict.

UNIFIL, in line with its strategic priorities as confirmed in the 2017 strategic review (S/2017/202), and in close coordination with the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, continues to work with the parties in fulfilling those obligations and, in particular, to support the efforts of the Government of Lebanon to extend the authority of the State in southern Lebanon, including by increasing the capacity and presence of the Lebanese Armed Forces.

I continue to be encouraged by the steps that the Government of Lebanon has taken to reinforce the Lebanese Armed Forces and extend State authority south of the Litani River further to the adoption of Security Council resolution 2373 (2017), in which the Council called for "an effective and durable deployment of the Lebanese Armed Forces in southern Lebanon and the territorial waters of Lebanon at an accelerated pace". These steps included the deployment in September 2017 of the

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Fifth Intervention Regiment, the inauguration in May 2018 of the Lebanese Armed Forces regional civil-military cooperation centre in the south, and steady progress in operationalizing the Lebanese Armed Forces model regiment, in addition to efforts to acquire an additional vessel for the Lebanese navy. The increased capacity and presence of the Lebanese Armed Forces in southern Lebanon has enabled further cooperation and coordinated activities between the Lebanese Armed Forces and UNIFIL, as called for in resolution 2373 (2017), including permanent and temporary checkpoints and counter-rocket-launching operations. It is significant that the Lebanese Armed Forces initiated coordinated foot patrols along the Blue Line, with 213 such patrols conducted in June 2018.

A strong, sustainable presence of the Lebanese Armed Forces in southern Lebanon is a vital element in enhancing State presence in southern Lebanon and in moving from the fragile cessation of hostilities to a permanent ceasefire. Such a presence is also an important demonstration of the commitment of Lebanon to resolution 1701 (2006). The United Nations is committed to enhancing its support for those efforts, including with respect to ensuring that there should be no unauthorized armed personnel, assets or weapons in the area between the Blue Line and the Litani River, bearing in mind the primary responsibility of the Lebanese Armed Forces in that regard. UNIFIL will continue to adapt its posture to ensure that it acts with all means available within its mandate and capabilities regarding the illegal presence of armed personnel, weapons or infrastructure.

I reiterate my call for further international support for the Lebanese Armed Forces, including within the framework of the International Support Group for Lebanon, building on the commitments made by the Government of Lebanon regarding the implementation of resolutions 1701 (2006) and 2373 (2017) during the "Rome II conference" held in March 2018.

In the absence of progress towards a permanent ceasefire, the ability of UNIFIL to deter, prevent and de-escalate the conflict remains of vital importance. The emphasis that UNIFIL places on prevention continues to be part and parcel of its operational and non-operational activities. By mitigating risks in a timely manner, UNIFIL continues to prevent small incidents from escalating into large-scale violence and to safeguard the cessation of hostilities. In that regard, the constructive liaison and coordination facilitated by UNIFIL with the parties, including through the tripartite mechanism, is critical in de-escalating tensions and building trust.

This has been especially important during periods of heightened tension in recent months on both sides of the Blue Line in response to certain developments, as elaborated in my reports on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2018/210 and S/2018/703). For example, a particularly tense situation over construction works carried out by the Israel Defense Forces in several areas south of the Blue Line was de-escalated in April 2018 through liaison efforts with the parties led by the UNIFIL Head of Mission and Force Commander.

The liaison and coordination arrangements, including the tripartite mechanism, continue to play a crucial role in maintaining stability. The tripartite forum has remained flexible, enabling the parties to discuss a wide range of issues, including practical arrangements on the ground to further stabilize the situation along the Blue Line. In this regard, UNIFIL has been facilitating discussions with the parties with a view to addressing contentious points along the Blue Line.

UNIFIL has taken a number of proactive steps to enhance the pace, visibility and effectiveness of its operations in accordance with resolution 2373 (2017). It has expanded foot patrols along the Blue Line and in villages where heavy vehicular movements are problematic, increased night patrols along the Blue Line, utilized air assets more effectively, including by increasing the number of operational flights,

such as reconnaissance of sensitive areas, and undertaken night flights to monitor wadis. Between August 2017 and May 2018, it increased its monthly operational activities from 13,362 to 14,871, with a 68 per cent increase in foot patrols and a 28 per cent increase in the average flight hours of reconnaissance air patrols. UNIFIL continues to look at ways to adjust its operations in an effort to ensure that it remains a credible, flexible and mobile force.

The freedom of movement of UNIFIL was generally respected, with exceptions detailed in my previous reports on the implementation of resolution 1701 (2006) (S/2017/964, S/2018/210 and S/2018/703). Each time its freedom of movement was restricted, UNIFIL took immediate action with the respective national and local authorities and the Lebanese Armed Forces to restore access, either by vehicle or on foot. Following several restrictions of movement in May 2018 (S/2018/703), UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces took steps to ensure that sites maintained by "Green Without Borders", situated in close proximity to the Blue Line, were accessed and monitored without hindrance. It is imperative that the freedom of movement of UNIFIL be fully respected and unimpeded within its area of operations.

The increased pace of operations and the more intrusive patrolling conducted in accordance with the implementation of resolution 2373 (2017) has not affected the relationship with the local population, which has remained largely positive. UNIFIL continued to identify and implement quick-impact projects to address the pressing needs of local communities, support the extension of State authority in the south and contribute to local acceptance of the presence of the Force in line with its strategic priorities.

UNIFIL also continued its engagement with the Lebanese Armed Forces to explore ways to conduct activities that would benefit local communities south of the Litani River. In this regard, the newly inaugurated Lebanese Armed Forces regional civil-military cooperation centre will be important as it is expected to strengthen cooperation between the Lebanese Armed Forces and communities across southern Lebanon, including in the field of emergency preparedness and civilian protection.

In January 2018, the UNIFIL Maritime Task Force completed its reconfiguration in line with the recommendations of the 2017 strategic review (S/2017/202). The Maritime Task Force, which currently comprises six vessels and has an authorized maximum number of personnel of 780, continues to support the Lebanese navy in carrying out maritime interdiction operations and joint training. By enabling a stable and safe maritime environment, the Maritime Task Force not only contributes to enhancing maritime trade, but also deters the use of Lebanese territorial waters for illicit purposes.

As at July 2018, the total number of military personnel stands at 10,426. The UNIFIL civilian component includes 235 international and 585 national staff. I am grateful to the 42 troop-contributing countries that comprise UNIFIL for their ongoing commitment. The deterrent effect of the presence and operations of UNIFIL, on land and at sea, continues to play a crucial role in maintaining stability in southern Lebanon and along the Blue Line. The UNIFIL presence is also key to creating an environment conducive to a political process in which a permanent ceasefire could be discussed. UNIFIL, in close coordination with the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon, is ready to lend its full support to the parties in that process.

Regarding the financial aspects of UNIFIL, by its resolution 72/299 and decision 72/558, adopted on 5 July 2018, the General Assembly appropriated the amount of $474.4 million for the maintenance of the Force for the period from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019. As at 16 July 2018, unpaid assessed contributions to the Special Account for UNIFIL amounted to $56.2 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to

$2,072.2 million. Reimbursement of troop costs has been made for the period up to 30 April 2018, while reimbursement of the costs of contingent-owned equipment has been made for the period up to 31 March 2018, in accordance with the quarterly schedule. Should the Security Council decide to extend the mandate of the Force beyond 31 August 2018, the cost of maintaining UNIFIL would be limited to the amounts approved by the Assembly.

I would like to express my appreciation to the Head of Mission and Force Commander of UNIFIL, Major General Michael Beary, and to all the military and civilian personnel of UNIFIL, for the work they are carrying out in southern Lebanon and for their commitment to the service of peace.

I pay tribute to peacekeepers who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of peace and to all men and women who have served in UNIFIL since its inception 40 years ago.

I would also like to express my appreciation for the unified and steadfast support of the Security Council to UNIFIL and its mandated activities. With the above information in mind, I recommend that the Council extend the mandate of UNIFIL for a further period of 12 months, until 31 August 2019.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

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Security Council

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Letter dated 31 July 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith information bulletins from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic for the period 28–31 July 2018 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) D. **Polyanskiy**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 31 July 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (28 July 2018)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported three incidents of gunfire: two in Ladhiqiyah Governorate and one in Hama Governorate.

The Turkish representative office has reported four incidents of gunfire in the following Governorates: two in Hama, one in Aleppo and one in Idlib.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out one humanitarian operation. In Tabiyah, Dayr al-Zawr Governorate, 650 food parcels with a total weight of 2.8 tons were distributed.

In total, 1,874 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,816.26 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 88 residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 86,450 residents.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

No ceasefire agreements have been signed over the past 24 hours.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process is 2,518.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (29 July 2018)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported 11 incidents of gunfire: 8 in Ladhiqiyah Governorate and 3 in Aleppo Governorate.

The Turkish representative office has not reported any incidents of gunfire.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out two humanitarian operations.

- In Tafas, Dar'a Governorate, 650 food parcels with a total weight of 2.6 tons were distributed as humanitarian aid.
- In Kafr Nan, Homs Governorate, 650 food parcels with a total weight of 2.8 tons were distributed as humanitarian aid.

In total, 1,876 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,855.66 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 71 residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 86,635 residents.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

No ceasefire agreements have been signed over the past 24 hours.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process is 2,518.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (30 July 2018)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported nine incidents of gunfire: six in Ladhiqiyah Governorate and three in Aleppo Governorate.

The Turkish representative office has not reported any incidents of gunfire.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

Over the past 24 hours, the Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has carried out one humanitarian operation. In Damascus, Damascus Governorate, 80 kg of honey and 33 packs of sweets were distributed, with a total weight of 108 kg.

In total, 1,877 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,855.76 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to 71 residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 86,635 residents.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

No ceasefire agreements have been signed over the past 24 hours.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process is 2,518.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

Information bulletin from the Russian Federation Ministry of Defence regarding the status of implementation of the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas (31 July 2018)

Observance of the ceasefire regime

Monitoring groups have continued to monitor observance of the ceasefire regime as part of implementing the Memorandum on the creation of de-escalation areas in the Syrian Arab Republic, signed by the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey and the Islamic Republic of Iran on 4 May 2017.

The situation in the de-escalation areas has been assessed as stable.

The Russian representative office of the Russian and Turkish Joint Commission reviewing issues related to violations of the ceasefire regime has reported 15 incidents of gunfire in the following Governorates: 8 in Aleppo, 6 in Ladhiqiyah and 1 in Hama.

The Turkish representative office has reported six incidents of gunfire in Aleppo Governorate.

Provision of humanitarian aid to the population of the Syrian Arab Republic

The Centre for Reconciliation of Opposing Sides in the Syrian Arab Republic has not carried out any humanitarian operations over the past 24 hours.

In total, 1,877 humanitarian operations have been carried out.

The total weight of humanitarian cargo delivered is 2,855.76 tons.

Over the past 24 hours, medical assistance has been provided to nine residents.

In total, medical assistance has been provided to 86,751 residents.

Reconciliation of opposing sides

No ceasefire agreements have been signed over the past 24 hours.

The number of populated areas that have joined the reconciliation process is 2,518.

The number of armed groups that have announced their commitment to accepting and fulfilling the terms of the ceasefire is unchanged — it is still 234.

United Nations S/2018/752

Security Council

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1 August 2018

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Letter dated 31 July 2018 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

In paragraph 43 of resolution 2399 (2018), the Security Council requested the Secretariat to provide benchmarks to assess the arms embargo measures in the Central African Republic according to the progress of security sector reform, including with respect to the Central African Armed Forces and internal security forces and their needs, on the basis of option 3 of my letter dated 10 July 2017 to the President of the Security Council (S/2017/597).

The present letter reflects the consultations of the Secretariat with the Central African authorities, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), the Panel of Experts on the Central African Republic, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), the European Union Military Training Mission in the Central African Republic, the diplomatic community and civil society in the Central African Republic. On 21 May 2018, consultations were held in New York with the Permanent Representative of the Central African Republic to the United Nations and, on 6 June, a videoconference was held with the Minister of Defence of the Central African Republic, Marie-Noëlle Koyara. On 30 May, the Secretariat briefed the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) concerning the Central African Republic on the assessment mission to the Central African Republic, which was conducted from 12 to 15 June.

The present benchmarks to assess the arms embargo measures are also guided by my letter dated 15 May 2018 to the President of the Security Council (S/2018/463), in which I provided recommendations on the support for the progressive and coordinated redeployment of the armed forces units trained by the European Union Military Training Mission in the Central African Republic, in support of the national joint five-year concept for the deployment of the armed forces and the internal security forces validated in February 2018.

The proposed benchmarks, supplemented with specific targets, could serve as a basis for the Security Council to assess the contribution and relevance of the arms embargo to supporting the relevant aspects of the security sector reform programme, the national management of weapons and ammunition and the prevention of the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. They could also promote greater understanding among the Central African authorities of the arms embargo, in particular its exemption provisions, and facilitate closer collaboration between the Central African authorities and the Committee on this issue.

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Arms embargo

Following the coup d'état by the Séléka armed groups on 24 March 2013 and the collapse of the Central African defence and security forces, the Government lost all control over weapons and ammunition in its custody, and the Séléka equipped most of its ranks from government stockpiles during its march on Bangui, resulting in the illicit proliferation of weapons and ammunition throughout the territory and contributing to continued instability. This situation has been compounded by the ongoing illicit flow of weapons and ammunition from the territories of neighbouring States into the Central African Republic, mainly for the benefit of non-State armed groups. Decades of politicization and polarization along ethnic lines had left the national armed forces fractured and with uncertain loyalties and contributed to fuelling successive conflicts in the country. Some elements of the armed forces collaborated with armed groups and committed violations of international human rights and humanitarian law during the 2012–2013 conflict and beyond. To address that situation, the Security Council adopted specific sanction measures to contribute to the restoration of peace and security in the Central African Republic. Those measures accompany other peace and security instruments and decisions based on the Charter of the United Nations, including the deployment of MINUSCA. On 5 December 2013, with its resolution 2127 (2013), the Council imposed a general arms embargo on the territory of the Central African Republic. In addition, on 28 January 2014, the Council adopted an asset freeze and a travel ban that might be imposed on individuals and entities acting in breach of certain actions specified in the resolution. The Committee's sanctions list currently contains the names of 11 individuals and two entities. The first designations in the Committee took place in May 2014, and the most recent in May 2017.

Since its establishment in 2013, the arms embargo had been modified by the Security Council. In 2015, following a request from the Government of the Central African Republic to ease the embargo and a visit of the Chair of the Committee to the country, the Committee amended its guidelines to allow the Central African authorities to submit arms embargo exemption requests and notifications, as a confirmation of the Committee's support to the Central African authorities in the reform of the security sector.

In January 2016, with its resolution 2262 (2016), the Security Council eased the arms embargo, requiring only a notification to the Committee for the provision of non-lethal materiel and operational and non-operational training to the Central African authorities.

There are currently three distinct exemptions to the arms embargo, contained in resolution 2399 (2018): exemptions subject to the approval of the Committee; exemptions requiring an advance notification to the Committee; and standing exemptions for which no prior approval from or notification to the Committee is required. There are no exemptions under the arms embargo for non-State armed groups in the Central African Republic, which are all prohibited from receiving weapons from any source.

First, arms embargo exemptions subject to the approval of the Committee are for:

(a) Supplies brought into the Central African Republic by Chadian or Sudanese forces solely for their use in international patrols of the tripartite force established on 23 May 2011 in Khartoum by the Central African Republic, Chad and the Sudan, to enhance security in the common border areas, in cooperation with MINUSCA;

(b) Supplies of non-lethal military equipment intended solely for humanitarian or protective use, and related technical assistance or training;

(c) Supplies of arms and other related lethal equipment to the Central African security forces, including State civilian law enforcement institutions, intended solely for support for or use in the Central African process of security sector reform;

(d) Other sales or supply of arms and related materiel, or provision of assistance or personnel.

Second, Member States and international organizations are required to submit advance notifications to the Committee regarding the provision of the following assistance and equipment:

(a) Supplies of non-lethal equipment and provision of assistance, including operational and non-operational training to the Central African security forces, including State civilian law enforcement institutions, intended solely for support for or use in the Central African process of security sector reform, in coordination with MINUSCA;

(b) Supplies of small arms and other related equipment intended solely for use in international-led patrols providing security in the Sangha River Tri-national Protected Area to combat poaching, the smuggling of ivory and arms and other activities contrary to the national laws of the Central African Republic or its international legal obligations.

Third, arms embargo standing exemptions for which no prior approval from or advance notification of the Committee is required are for:

(a) Supplies intended solely for the support for or use by MINUSCA and the European Union training missions deployed in the Central African Republic, French forces under the conditions provided in paragraph 65 of resolution 2387 (2017), and other Member States forces providing training and assistance;

(b) Protective clothing, including flak jackets and military helmets, temporarily exported to the Central African Republic by United Nations personnel, representatives of the media and humanitarian and development workers and associated personnel, for their personal use only.

Since the imposition of the embargo, the Committee has received 54 exemption requests and 44 notifications from Member States and international organizations (including MINUSCA, the United Nations Development Programme and the European Union). As a result, the import of approximately 5,000 weapons of various types and 7 million rounds of ammunition has been approved by the Committee, with approximately 3,300 weapons and 7 million rounds of ammunition already transferred to the Central African Republic, in support of the security sector reform programme.

Under the arms embargo exemption provisions, the Government of the Central African Republic may submit requests to the Committee to receive arms and related materiel, and support has been provided to the Government in this regard. Since 2015, the Committee has convened several meetings on the arms embargo, including with the European Union Military Training Mission in the Central African Republic, MINUSCA, UNIDIR, the Mine Action Service and the Central African authorities, which have strengthened the dialogue between the Committee and the Government and facilitated a better understanding of the regime, including its notification and exemption procedures. In 2017, the Panel of Experts also organized a briefing in Bangui for the national authorities. I also note that MINUSCA has played an essential support role in assisting the Central African authorities with their exemption requests, over and above the other tasks of the Mission.

To date, the Government of the Central African Republic has submitted a total of 12 exemption requests, of which 10 have been approved by the Committee and 2 are still under consideration.

The Government has also submitted seven notifications. The primary recipient of weapons and ammunition has been the armed forces, followed by the internal security forces (police and gendarmerie). Several requests have been transmitted by the Ministry of the Environment, Water and Forests to provide lethal and non-lethal equipment for the rangers associated with the Chinko project, with a view to combatting poaching. No requests so far have been submitted by the customs authorities, which fall within the purview of the Ministry of Finance and Budget, or by the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Water Resources, whose Special Anti-Fraud Unit enforces the implementation of national legislation regulating the mining industry.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Central Africans Abroad is the focal point for the submission of exemption requests and notifications to the Committee, through the Permanent Mission of the Central African Republic to the United Nations. An interministerial coordination committee on the arms embargo, chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was established in August 2017 to ensure broad understanding of the arms exemption provisions across all relevant ministries and to work towards the balanced provision of weapons and assistance to all relevant security services in the Central African Republic. However, owing to the lack of resources, the coordination mechanism led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has not been sufficiently operational. To remedy this, the Ministry of Defence has established its own subcommittee to prepare exemption requests and notifications.

To date, because of its progress in the development and implementation of strategic plans, the defence sector has been able to receive arms and ammunition through the arms embargo exemption provisions. Similar progress could be made in other parts of the security sector (internal security forces, mines, water and forests, customs), including by detailing the functions and requirements of the requesters, thereby enabling related institutions to receive the appropriate support under the arms embargo. On the other hand, effective interministerial coordination on the arms embargo could enable the Central African authorities to prioritize specific areas that require support and help to better liaise with potential partners.

The assessment team noted the ratification by the Central African Republic of the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and All Parts and Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly (the Kinshasa Convention) on 24 October 2012 and its accession to the Arms Trade Treaty on 7 October 2015, and it encouraged the Central African authorities to continue to take advantage of the forum provided by the Kinshasa Convention to enhance and operationalize regional cooperation in addressing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons, in particular by non-State armed groups.

At the first Conference of States Parties to the Kinshasa Convention, held in Yaoundé from 11 to 13 June 2018, the Conference adopted a declaration in which it highlighted, inter alia, that the access of non-State actors to small arms and light weapons constituted a threat to security, stability and development in Central Africa. In the same declaration, it also stated that regional States should cooperate with the Central African Republic to address the illicit manufacturing of and traffic in weapons and ammunition in the subregion. The Government of the Central African Republic expressed appreciation for the progress made in processing requests for exemptions, which had allowed the initial deployments of armed forces in operations conducted jointly with MINUSCA. The gradual redeployment of professional and inclusive

defence and security forces remains a key government priority, along with the promotion of inclusive dialogue; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; the security sector reform; and national reconciliation. At the same time, the Central African authorities have repeatedly called for the termination of the arms embargo, as they perceive it to hinder support for the legitimate government security forces, while failing to impede the supply of arms to illegal non-State armed entities engaged in illicit economic activities and violence against civilians.

Proposed benchmarks

The present section outlines three key benchmarks (with specific targets) for the Security Council to assess the arms embargo in the Central African Republic, in particular to measure how it contributes to the overall stabilization of the country. The benchmarks and related targets set out below should be reviewed to assess their progress, as appropriate.

Benchmark 1: progress on the security sector reform, including the armed forces and the internal security forces and their needs

Further to paragraph 43 of resolution 2399 (2018), a benchmark for progress with the security sector reform, including the armed forces and the internal security forces and their needs, would be helpful to assess the continued need for the arms embargo regime in relation to the Central African security services. Ultimately, such progress should lead to professional and accountable national defence and security forces capable of using and managing weapons and ammunition in an appropriate manner, reducing the risks of their illicit transfer and misuse against the population. It would also contribute to achieving the objectives set forth in my letter to the President of the Security Council of 15 May 2018.

The first target would be for the defence and security forces to uphold the principles of accountability and of the rule of law. Such a target would be measured against progress made in putting in place the required strategic, legislative and regulatory frameworks that provide effective civilian oversight and improved mechanisms for accountability for breaches of discipline and conduct.

The second target would be to transform the Central African defence and internal security forces into inclusive, professional, ethnically representative and regionally balanced forces. This target would be measured against the efforts to launch an inclusive recruitment process and to integrate demobilized individuals from armed groups and ensure proper vetting of new recruits.

The third target would be to ensure that these forces are progressively supported in a regular and reliable manner. This would be measured against national efforts to increase the necessary budget allocations and resources and ensure the regular salary and subsistence payments of deployed units.

The fourth target would be to ensure that these forces gain by their impartiality the trust and confidence of local populations in areas where they are deployed. This target would be measured against progress in the acceptance of the security forces by all communities, including through regular assessments of local perceptions.

Benchmark 2: progress on national weapons management and ammunition capacity

Further to paragraph 6 of resolution 2399 (2018), a benchmark on progress related to the ability of the Central African authorities to store and manage weapons and ammunition in their possession, including those transferred from the stocks of MINUSCA, and in accordance with international best practices and norms, could also

usefully inform the need to maintain the arms embargo. In this regard, ensuring that weapons and ammunition provided through exemptions are not diverted and illicitly trafficked would show progress in this area.

The first target would be to ensure full compliance with the arms embargo and its exemption procedures, including the full operationalization of required coordination mechanisms. This would be measured, inter alia, by the creation and effective implementation of a national system to receive, store, monitor and track arms and ammunition, as well as the disposal of captured or seized military equipment, as well as the implementation of a national regulatory framework for the import of arms and ammunition, including those in private possession.

In addition, this target would be measured by the process of distributing weapons and ammunition to fully trained and vetted Central African defence and internal security forces. It would also be measured by a strong and effective coordination mechanism between the Government, security forces and relevant international partners to ensure coherence and transparency.

The second target would be to ensure that the Central African authorities match their request for weapons and ammunition with the availability of secure storage and management capacity. While the Central African authorities, with the support of the Mine Action Service, have improved their weapons and ammunition storage and management, this benchmark would help to ensure that the planning and scheduling of weapons requests and deliveries are matched with the development of storage and management capacities. There are currently 49 functional armouries in the entire country, with an approximate storage capacity of 6,500 weapons. As MINUSCA has assessed that the existing absorption capacity for the storage of weapons and ammunition may be reached in the near future, continued support from the international community will be required to build additional storage capacity and mentor security services to manage weapons and ammunition.

The third target would be that the Central African authorities ensure the collection or destruction of surplus, seized, unmarked or illicitly held weapons and ammunition, and incorporate such elements into the security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, in compliance with paragraph 3 of resolution 2399 (2018).

The Central African Republic would require sustained international assistance and cooperation to implement these weapons and ammunition management activities successfully. In this regard, Member States and relevant international and regional organizations in a position to do so should provide capacity-building support to the national Central African authorities, in particular in the areas of storage management (including storage facility construction, training and mentoring), marking and record-keeping, as appropriate.

Benchmark 3: progress on the effective monitoring and management of borders to address the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons

Further to paragraph 7 of resolution 2399 (2018), a benchmark should assess improved regional and national efforts to counter the illicit flow of weapons and ammunition into the Central African Republic and to ensure the traceability of the weapons and ammunition produced on the territories of the Central African Republic and neighbouring States, in particular to non-State armed groups.

The first target should be mounting efforts to increase cross-border cooperation to counter the illicit flow of weapons and ammunition into the Central African Republic. This target could be measured against increased efforts from regional States, with the support of international partners, to address known arms-trafficking

hubs in the Central African Republic, including through the allocation of sufficient resources and the deployment of personnel.

Known arms-trafficking hubs include Garoua Boulaï and Ngaoundaye (on the border with Cameroon); Moyen-Sido and Tisi (on the border with Chad); Béma, Satema and Mobaye, on the Ubangui River, which separates the Central African Republic from the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and Am Dafok (on the border with the Sudan). The arms embargo provides regional States with the legal framework to seize arms and related materiel coming in and out of the Central African Republic in those areas. When weapons are seized in the Central African Republic and in neighbouring countries, the Panel of Experts should be afforded the opportunity to inspect and document the seizures to ensure that appropriate investigations are undertaken to determine the source of those shipments, and should report to the Committee as appropriate. This target could therefore be measured by the number of weapons and ammunition seized. Furthermore, it could be measured against efforts to reactivate joint commissions between the Central African Republic and Chad, Cameroon and the Sudan, and the establishment of similar joint commissions with the Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These mixed commissions may usefully consider questions relating to countering arms and ammunition trafficking. However, it should be noted that the Central African Republic has little control over its borders and that illicit arms flows mainly benefit criminal organizations outside the country and facilitate the illicit activities of non-State armed groups in the Central African Republic.

The second target addresses national institution-building and legislative steps to strengthen the ability of the Central African Republic to address illicit weapons trafficking, in particular with regard to non-State armed groups. These include strengthening the capacity of law enforcement authorities other than the internal security forces, including border, customs and water and forests entities in the Central African Republic, to work alongside MINUSCA (Working Group on Arms Trafficking) in order to inspect any shipment and seize illicit weapons, taking into account the known trafficking hubs outlined above.

It could also be measured against progress in the functioning of the National Commission to Combat the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, the development of the national strategy and action plan, as well as a review of legislation on national firearms control that dates back to 1964.

This could include using the baseline elaborated by the Panel of Experts in 2014, which would allow it to better appreciate the kinds of weapons in circulation and the potential quantity of arms held by armed groups, and would facilitate the collection of weapons in accordance with disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and other arms collection processes.

The third target is the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of non-State armed groups in accordance with the related national programme. It is only with the complete disbandment of these groups and the reestablishment of an accountable State authority over the country, including by means of enabling legislative frameworks, that the aims of the arms embargo would be achieved.

Conclusion

I welcome the engagement and efforts of the Central African authorities to comply with the arms embargo regime and their active engagement to further improve the Government's understanding of the arms embargo. The arms embargo has not prevented the Government from receiving weapons through the prevailing exemption provisions. Weapons have been successfully requested and transferred under the auspices of the arms embargo and the supervision of the Committee, which has

facilitated the deployment of the armed forces units trained by the European Union Military Training Mission in the Central African Republic. This information needs to be more effectively communicated throughout the national security institutions of the Central African Republic, as well as to the population. To ensure that this momentum is maintained throughout the full security sector reform, the Government also needs to address its capacity for weapons management, which would in turn facilitate the further transfer of needed arms and related materiel.

The arms embargo, however, must also stem the illicit flow of weapons to non-State armed groups. This is an important performance indicator of the arms embargo for the people of the country, who are calling for relief from the predatory behaviour of these actors. Given the regional nature of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, close and effective cooperation between the Central African Republic and its neighbours is essential. In this regard, the Chair and the Committee can play an important role in communicating and facilitating such regional cooperation.

I encourage the Security Council to consider the benchmarks that have been identified in the present report to assess the continued relevance of the arms embargo and its impact on the overall situation in the Central African Republic. Should the Council endorse the benchmarks, and given the mandate of MINUSCA to support the Central African authorities in the fulfilment of the tasks related to the security sector reform and the monitoring of the implementation of the measures renewed and modified by the Council in paragraph 1 of resolution 2399 (2018), I will report on their progress through my regular reports to the Council as well as through special reports, if required.

With the full commitment of the Government of the Central African Republic and the support of its international partners, I am confident that the arms embargo will continue to support the country as it makes steady progress in the redeployment plan and beyond.

I should be grateful if you would bring the present letter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

United Nations S/2018/753

Security Council

Distr.: General
1 August 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 27 July 2018 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH), established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2350 (2017) of 13 April 2017, the mandate of which was most recently extended by the Council in its resolution 2410 (2018) of 10 April 2018.

Following the usual consultations, I would like to inform you of my intention to appoint Ms. Helen Meagher La Lime (United States of America) as my Special Representative for Haiti and Head of MINUJUSTH. Ms. La Lime will succeed Ms. Susan D. Page, who completed her assignment on 4 May 2018. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Ms. Page for her dedicated service and effective leadership of MINUJUSTH.

I should be grateful if you would bring this matter to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

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United Nations S/2018/754

Security Council

Distr.: General
1 August 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 31 July 2018 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that your letter dated 27 July 2018 (S/2018/753) concerning your intention to appoint Ms. Helen Meagher La Lime (United States of America) as your Special Representative for Haiti and Head of the United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH) has been brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council, who have taken due note of it. The members of the Council have again recalled Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations.

(*Signed*) Olof **Skoog**
President of the Security Council

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